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RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 MASERU 000034

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FOR DS A/S GRIFFITH, DS/DAS STARR, AF A/S FRAZER, AF/EX NOLAN
AND KEETON, AND AF/S MUNCY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 1/23/2017
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [AMGT](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CVIS](#) [LT](#)
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S QUARTERLY REPORT ON SECURITY

REF: 06 MASERU 555 AND PREVIOUS

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CLASSIFIED BY: June Carter Perry, Ambassador, EXEC , STATE.
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

This is an action message. See para 1.

1, (C) The critical crime threat level continues in Lesotho. With elections pending and the major increase in staffing (with more to come) AmEmbassy Lesotho is still awaiting the actual assignment of an RSO following the August 2006 commitment by Diplomatic Security (DS). In order to obtain the RSO as soon as possible, post requests immediate advertisement of this position in order to provide full review of new long-term housing for five agencies; regular review and training of guards; and ongoing liaison with national law enforcement and security services. The GOL (specifically, the Deputy Prime Minister) has admitted that it simply cannot provide the kind of police protection necessary due to lack of human and financial resources. We have already recounted the brutal invasion of an American Missionary's home and the holding of his wife and children at gunpoint. We have also reported the murder of a Clinton Foundation worker by an AK 47 or an Israeli-made similar weapon. These incidents reflect the inherent violence as expressed in the 2006 political assassination and attempted assassinations. On January 17, 2007, a group of 5-6 men, armed with guns and an axe, invaded the home of some Chinese residents in Butha Buthe, north of Lesotho. They seriously wounded four victims via shooting and axing. The victims had to be transported immediately to a nearby medical facility in South Africa where they remain in critical condition. In addition to seeking security aide from the U.S., the GOL has also expressed its concern about the potential for Islamist terrorist activities as the situation in East Africa becomes more hazardous for rogue organizations.

12. (SBU) I have been meeting individually (and with other donors) with political party leaders, most of whom attended our January 17 Martin Luther King Program, emphasizing free, fair and non-violent action before and after the February 17 national elections. Although the GOL and opposition party leaders have assured us of their efforts to conduct this major political exercise responsibly, they have admitted some renegade elements may still exist. Great numbers of unemployed youth have joined one new opposition party and, although reportedly have been told to hold peaceful rallies, remain an unpredictable force. As long as the great proportion of youth remain unemployed, the potential for pre and post election actions cannot be discounted. The Lesotho Defense Force must take much of the

police responsibilities due to the police forces' lack of resources.

¶3. (SBU) As Chief of Mission, I bear responsibility for USG employees and for the safety and security of the larger American community, including 85 Peace Corps Volunteers, 200 missionaries and 30-40 official USG long-term TDYers. Support for safety and security must be a sustained effort, not just when high level visitors arrive or elections occur. I urge the immediate search for a resident RSO and look forward to your response.

¶4. (U) Following is the incident report from the post security officer (who also serves as the Management Officer) with weighty responsibilities:

PSO Incident Report (October 24, 2006 - January 22, 2007)

Security Coordination:

PSO or his designee attended weekly SD coordination meetings as well as regular weekly security briefings with SU Project Manager, FSNI and SD Coordinator. PSO also attended one regular Focal Point Security meeting with wide participation from other diplomatic missions, NGO's, and international organizations.

In coordination with FSNI, SD Coordinator, SU Project Manager, and members of the Focal Point for Security (UN, Dip Missions, NGOs, etc), the following incidents have been compiled for your attention.

Nov. 11: Three armed men robbed Hi-Fi City, Maseru, pistol-whipped all the store's customers with their hand guns, and shot twice in the air. No one was seriously injured. One customer was taken to QEII for minor head wounds. The thieves ran off with an undisclosed amount of money, laptops, car speakers, and the vehicle. The vehicle was later recovered at Borokhoaneng, Maseru.

Nov. 14: According to reports by Mo-Afrika Radio, high-jackers placed big rocks on the road to Thaba Tseka. When the Mo-Afrika vehicle stopped to remove the rocks the car-jackers began

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shooting. The Mo-Afrika staff members miraculously escaped unharmed.

Nov. 16: Armed thieves robbed Lesotho Nissan employees at the Lesotho Bank in the Maseru West Industrial area outside the bank. NSS reported to the scene to investigate. No further reports have been received.

Nov. 24: Ellen Jacobina Verwey was killed by unknown assailants at around 10:30 pm at the gate of the Minister of Trade and Industry Honorable Mpho Malie. She was with three of her friends at the time. A driver of the Qiloane Cab Co. also received gunshot wounds. He reportedly continues his recovery.

Twenty-eight AK 47 rifle shells were found at the scene. No one has been arrested and the police have offered a reward of M200,000 for anyone who can provide clues to the arrest of the killers. US Embassy Pretoria Legatt officials responded immediately to a request relayed thru Embassy Maseru from Lesotho's DPM for assistance with the investigation of this and other allegedly politically motivated shooting incidents which have taken place over the course of the past year.

Nov. 24: A stolen vehicle from Bloemfontein was recovered in Maseru by LMPS officials and returned to its rightful owner. The thieves were incarcerated. They have since been tried in court, found guilty, and sentenced to eight years in prison.

Nov. 25: A white Nissan single cab, was hi-jacked by three armed men. No one was reported injured. The vehicle was found later at Lancers Gap, locked, with the keys missing. No arrests have been made.

Nov. 27: Four Filipino men arrived at a SU security post, near the Basotho Hat, reporting that two young boys had robbed them of M1000.00 and a cell-phone at knife point. The men came from the Victoria Hotel walking toward town. SU Reaction Team sought the boys but they were not found.

Nov. 27: Three armed robbers were arrested at Ha Matala, Maseru after stealing about M2,000 from a sheep salesman.

Dec 2: A Mosotho man arrived at a Security Unlimited (SU) site near Mpilo Lodge, looking for protection. He said that he was confronted by three young men, on Kingsway going in the direction of town, demanding money from him. He refused and they were about to attack him when he ran away. The SU security officer immediately called for back-up. When the SU Reaction Team arrived, they took the man to his residence at Ha-Thetsane, uninjured.

Dec 6th: An Indian businessman from Pick'n'Pay Store in downtown Maseru was robbed of USD 11,400 at about 11am outside the Standard Lesotho Bank. The armed robbers stole a Toyota Tazz and later abandoned it next to Sparrows restaurant. A woman employee (26) of the Standard Lesotho Bank was arrested in connection with that incident with money amounting to USD 2,500. The husband and the three other suspects are still at large.

Dec. 6th: At least three people and one member of LDF have been arrested in connection with the armed robbery at Machache Post Office. Balaclava-clad thieves stole money amounting to M167, 000, mainly the monthly salaries of the Post Office's client-pensioners. The robbers broke into the house of one of the employees and forced her to take them to the PO safe and open it. The three suspects were caught with money amounting to M27, 000, new expensive furniture, clothes and female shoes. There are nine total suspects. Five remain at large.

Dec 21: A member of the SADF had his vehicle and personal effects stolen by thieves in Mafeteng District. LMPS officials in Mafeteng recovered the stolen property.

Dec 21: Lesotho High Court pronounced a death penalty sentence to the convicted killer of a Mosotho man for the 2003 death of a Maseru man. The sentence is that the killer be hung by the neck for his crime.

Dec 24: A man was found dead after drinking a poison at Mazenod, Ha Paki, Maseru. The deceased had badly quarreled with his wife two days before that incident. The wife reportedly found her husband strangling his four-year old son in suspicion that the child was not his biological child. The husband allegedly ambushed his wife on her way to church, then beat and stabbed her. She was taken to the hospital where she was in critical conditions. It later found that the man had also killed himself in the belief that his wife was also dead.

Dec 26: Unknown attackers stabbed and killed a Technician/Presenter of the Lesotho Television on 26th December 2006 at about 4am. The deceased, Mr. Mojalefa Mohlomi, was last seen having a good time at the place called Mahlokoaneng Jazz Pub at Khubetsoana Maseru. The investigations are still in progress.

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Dec. 26: The police are investigating an incident whereby a VW Microbus containing Botswana citizens was hijacked at or near St. Catherine's High School. According to police reports, the visitors were on their pilgrimage trip to one of the local churches. No arrests have yet been made.

Dec 28: A top police officer was caught in a police trap after demanding a bribe of USD 425 from a Mosotho woman. The woman was unable to meet the demand, and she promised to arrange payment. She then informed the CID police who, in turn, provided her with marked currency. The sting was performed and a Senior Superintendent was caught near the Agric Bank Building with the marked bills totaling M1, 000 in his possession.

Dec 30th: Two Peace Corps Trainees (a male and a female) were attacked by three thugs with knives, between Christie House Building and Peace Corps Training Center at around 17:00 hrs. The victims had been shopping in Central Maseru. They were almost 50m from the Peace Corps Training Center gate when they were robbed of USD 10, wine worth USD 12 and a box of

cigarettes. SU Response Team and the police were informed immediately. To date no one has been arrested.

Jan 1st: Two men failed to steal one of the SD cars at LPPA building where the SD offices are located at about 1300hrs. An alert security guard questioned the potential thieves, who portrayed themselves as the supervisors of the vehicle driver. The guard requested IDs and then contacted his colleagues to thwart the robbery attempt.

Jan 1st: A mob chased and caught two thugs who tried to rob two Chinese (a male and a female at the cross-junction traffic robots near LNDC center Maseru at about 1600hrs. They were brutally beaten and taken to the Maseru Central Charge Office. An innocent female by-stander was accidentally shot by an unknown gunman who allegedly attempted to shoot the thugs. 'M'e 'Mantsatsi Monoto of Sekamaneng, was shot in the chest while walking with her 6 or 7 year-old son near Engen filling station. She was quickly taken to Queen Elizabeth Hospital where she is reportedly recovering well. The two Chinese identified themselves as Medical Doctors from the QEII Hospital. The robbery was not successful because the victims yelled for help and got an immediate response from persons nearby.

Jan 3rd: An armored cash car of Fidelity Co. was robbed of an undetermined amount of cash at gun point at 'Moteng in the district of Botha Bothe. It is not clear how the safes were removed from the armored car. A mini bus which passed the scene was shot on the wheel by the culprits. Investigations are still in progress.

Jan 17: An armed gang critically wounded four Chinese in their home and robbed them. Victims remain in critical condition in a South African hospital due to gun and axe attacks.

POLICE STATISTICS FROM NOVEMBER 2006 TO DATE

CASES:	NO:	ARRESTS:
MURDER	96	35
ATTEPMPTED MURDER	29	
SEXUAL OFFENCES	17	
ROBBERIES	45	
HOUSE BREAKING	29	
CAR THEFT	15	
FRAUD	1	
PERRY		